

B.) CLAIM LISTING:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~In a network comprising a content server and a plurality of connected user computers, a~~ A method for delivering content comprising a storyline for a reality-based an electronic game from [[the]] a content server to at least one user computer in a network of connected user computers, the method comprising:

deconstructing the complete a complete storyline content into a plurality of episodes;

implementing in the content server a first episode into a first episodic game module one or more of said episodes into one or more corresponding episodic game modules;

generating a technology module and a content module for at least one of said one or more episodic game modules to allow modification of the technology module independently from modification of the content of said at least one episodic game module;

providing the first a first episodic game module to at least one user computer such that only a first portion of the complete storyline content is currently available; ~~thereafter~~

altering, in the content server, the first a subsequent portion of the storyline content to include a game-related reference to a current real-world event, said current event occurring after said first episodic game module is ~~transmitted~~ provided to the at least one user computer; and

providing the reference to the at least one user computer.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising:

scheduling intervals for generation and transmission of episodic game modules for the complete storyline content.

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising:

responsive to a technological improvement occurring during a first part of an interval for generation and transmission of an episodic game module, incorporating the technological improvement into the episodic game module scheduled for generation and transmission for that interval.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 further comprising:

responsive to a technological improvement occurring during implementation of an episode, incorporating the technological improvement into the episodic game module scheduled for generation and transmission for that interval.

5. (canceled)

6. (canceled)

7. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality of connected user computers, a method of delivering content comprising a storyline for a reality-based electronic game from the content server to at least one user comprising:

constructing a plurality of episodes to relate ~~[[the]]~~ a complete storyline content;

implementing in the content server ~~a first episode into a game module~~ a plurality of said episodes into a plurality of corresponding episodic game modules;

generating a technology module and a content module for each episodic game module to allow modification of the technology module without requiring modification of the content of an episodic game module;

transmitting ~~the first~~ a first episodic game module to at least one user computer such that only a portion of the complete storyline content is currently available; ~~thereafter~~

altering, in the content server the remaining storyline content to include a game-related reference to a current real-world event occurring after said first episodic game module is transmitted to the at least one user computer; and

providing the reference to the at least one user computer after the at least one user computer accesses the first episodic game module.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein an episodic game module is transmitted at periodically scheduled intervals.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the episodic game modules are transmitted monthly.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of providing an Internet-enabled game, said game including a plurality of episodes related to a storyline arc and made available serially on a periodic basis, the method including steps implemented in a computer system comprising:

providing access to an initial episodic content module and a technology module for implementing the content module, wherein the technology module can be modified independently from the content module; and thereafter

altering the storyline arc;

creating new episodic content related to the altered storyline arc;

receiving information regarding a user's current state in the game;

responsive to the current state indicating that a conditional action has been performed, enabling new episodic content to be accessed by a user; and

responsive to the current state indicating that a time ~~limit for performing the conditional action has been exceeded, automatically transmitting~~ is within a predetermined time frame, allowing new episodic content to be automatically transmitted to the user.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein automatically transmitting includes transmitting a voice mail message related to the user.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein automatically transmitting includes transmitting an e-mail message related to the user.

13. (Previously Presented) The method of 10 wherein automatically transmitting includes transmitting a pager message related to the user.

14-16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein current state information comprises a notification from an application module resident on a user's terminal that the user has accessed a pre-specified web page.

18. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein current state information comprises a user action.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the user action is calling a predefined telephone number.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the user action is accessing a predetermined web site.

21. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the user action is requesting a specific search term.

22. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein episodic content is stored within a third-party website that is content-related to the storyline, and the users are directed to the web-site to discover the episodic content.

23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22 wherein episodic content is placed on a third party web site for compensation related to user traffic to the web site related to users searching for the episodic content.

24. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein an episode is made available responsive to determining whether a user has submitted payment for the episode.

25-41 (Canceled)

42. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for a reality-based electronic game from the content server to at least one user computer, the method comprising:

deconstructing [[the]] a complete storyline content into a plurality of episodes;

implementing in the content server ~~an episode into a sequence of episodic game modules~~
a plurality of said episodes into a plurality of corresponding episodic game modules;

generating a technology module and a content module for each episodic game module to allow modification of the technology module independently from modification of the content of an episodic game module;

periodically transmitting one of the episodic game modules to at least one user computer such that only a portion of the complete storyline content is currently available; thereafter

altering in the content server [[the]] a remaining storyline content to include a game-related reference to a current real-world event occurring after a first one of said episodic game module modules is transmitted to the at least one user computer; and

providing the reference to the at least one user computer after the at least one user computer accesses the first episodic game module.

43. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for a reality-based electronic game from the content server to at least one user computer, the method comprising:

deconstructing the storyline into a plurality of episodes;

implementing in the content server ~~an episode into an episodic game module~~ at least one of said episodes into an episodic game module;

generating a technology module and a content module for each episodic game module to allow modification of the technology module without requiring modification of the content of an episodic game module;

periodically permitting access to one of the episodic game modules by at least one user computer such that only a portion of ~~[[the]]~~ a complete storyline content is currently available;

thereafter altering in the content server ~~[[the]]~~ a remaining storyline content to include a game-related reference to a current real-world event occurring after a first episodic game module is accessed by the at least one user computer; and

providing the reference to the at least one user computer after the at least one user computer accesses the first episodic game module.

44. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality of connected user terminals, a method for providing entertainment content comprising a storyline for an electronic game from the content server to at least one user, the method including steps, implemented in the content server, comprising:

receiving a request from a user to gain access to an episode of the electronic game;

implementing in the content server an episode into an episodic game module comprising a content module and a technology module for implementing the content module, wherein said technology module can be modified independently from said content module;

delivering an episode of the electronic game to the user;

determining a date for the request received from the user; and

permitting access to the requested episode responsive to the determined date being within a permitted window for delivery.

45-46. (Canceled)

47. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further including implementing a second episode into an episodic game module and providing the second game module to the at least one user computer, said second game module including said game-related reference to the real-world event.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the reference is a fabricated news story related to the real world event.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein providing includes transmitting from the content server to the at least one user computer over a network.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein providing includes providing the first episodic game module on a computer readable medium readable by the at least one user computer.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the reference is provided to the at least one user computer by the content server using a network transport mechanism.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 51, wherein the network transport mechanism includes a mechanism for sending one of an e-mail, a voice mail, a facsimile, and an instant message.

53. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for a reality-based electronic game from a content server to a plurality of users, the method comprising:

implementing in the content server the storyline content into a plurality of episodes;

implementing the episodes into a sequence of episodic game modules wherein one or more of said episodic game modules comprises a content module and a technology module for implementing the content module, wherein said technology module can be modified independently from said content module; and

for each user, transmitting one or more of the episodic game modules to the user's computer on a conditional basis, such that the plurality of users ~~reach the same points in the game at approximately the same time~~ access the one or more of the episodic game modules in approximately the same time frame.

54. (Canceled)

55. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for a reality-based electronic game from the content server to a plurality of users, the method comprising:

implementing the storyline into a plurality of episodes;

implementing in the content server the episodes into a sequence of episodic game modules wherein each of the episodic game modules comprises a content module and a technology module for implementing the content module, and wherein said technology module can be modified independently from said content module;

for each user, permitting access to the episodic game modules on a conditional basis such that only a portion of the storyline content is currently available to the user; and

for each user, determining whether ~~an amount of time for completing a conditional action in a game episode has been exceeded~~ a time is within a predetermined time frame, and if so, automatically transmitting an episodic game module to the user to ensure that the users ~~reach the same points in the game~~ access the episodic game module at approximately the same time.

56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 55, wherein permitting access on a conditional basis includes determining whether the user has accomplished a task, and if so permitting access to the next episodic game module.

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein the task includes one of accessing a specific web site and entering a specific search term.

58. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for a reality-based electronic game from the content server to a plurality of users, the method comprising:

implementing the storyline into a plurality of episodes;

implementing in the content server the episodes into a sequence of episodic game modules wherein each of the episodic game modules comprises a content module and a technology module for implementing the content module, and wherein said technology module can be modified independently from said content module;

for each user, transmitting one or more episodic game modules to the user on a conditional basis such that only a portion of the storyline content is currently available to the user; and

for each user, determining whether ~~an amount of time for completing a conditional action in a game episode has been exceeded~~ a time is within a predetermined time frame, and if so, automatically transmitting an episodic game module to the user to ensure that the users ~~reach the same stages in the game~~ access the episodic game module at approximately the same time.